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other. It has pleased the Divine Providence that the creed of Chalcedon should be the last word of ecumenical authority on this subject; for subsequent ecumenical decisions do but confirm its import. And providentially, as we love to think, that symbol was made so broad that opinions the most diverse regarding the nature of Christ find shelter and sanction within its fold.

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2. — *A Compendious History of English Literature, and of the English Language, from the Norman Conquest. With Numerous Specimens.* By GEORGE L. CRAIK, LL. D., Professor of History and of English Literature in Queen's College, Belfast. New York: Charles Scribner. 1863. 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 620, 581.

A CAREFUL perusal of these two goodly volumes has dissipated the hope which we entertained on seeing their title. That gave us reason to expect that we were to have at last a *History* of English Literature in the true sense of the word, — one which would be a history of the English mind. We have several books — more or less good — giving us the external history of our literature, and we want the internal growth shown forth. The English character, like the English language, is composite. The nation formed from Celts and Saxons and Danes and Normans has traits of all. The English language, from its very composite nature, is one of the most perfect and most fitted for extended use of all modern tongues. Its strength, its gracefulness, its adaptability, all spring from its different elements, and from its readiness to admit new words and ideas. Hence for poetical use it is equal to most, for purposes of reasoning and plain statement inferior to none, and as a vehicle of scientific researches superior to all others. English literature, being the expression of a composite character in a composite language, must share the same character. A growth of over five centuries has given us a body of writings, which in originality, in depth, in vigor, and in style surpass those of any other one people. It is something of which we are not only ourselves proud, but which is looked to with admiration by other nations.

It is quite time that the history of this literature were scientifically and historically treated. That literature has an effect on the state of the people and on their civilization, few will deny; that the state of the people has also its influence on their literature, all will admit. We wish, then, that this reciprocal action should be fully considered and exhaustively treated. We wish to know the influence which English writers have exerted on English history; and more particularly the effect of the great

events of history on English thought. We would know how a foreign and how a civil war have left it, and how it flourished in a long peace; what was the effect of royal patronage, and what of the censorship; what has been the relation of literature to contemporary art and science, and how it has been affected by general education. We would ascertain why our literature has been so changing. In the reigns of Elizabeth and her successors, the drama was pre-eminent; under Anne, didactic poetry. The times of the first Georges abounded in pamphlets, political and historical; those of the later Georges in poetry of the Romantic school; and our own is an age of novels and journalism. Why is all this? Why does poetry flourish at one time, and at another time prose? Are these things governed by general laws, or by circumstances peculiar to the country? Why have there been, as it were, waves in English literature, so that there have been several periods of the production of good works? What has been the degree of the influence exerted by foreign literatures, as the French, Italian, and German? and what influence has the literature had upon itself, or how far have later been affected by earlier writers? What was the cause of that abandonment of conventionalism, and that tendency toward nature or realism, which appeared in English literature about the beginning of this century,—a little later than in Germany, and a little earlier than in France,—showing itself first in poetry, then in prose, then in art, and lastly in music? All these questions, and many others, ought properly to be considered in a good history. A mere catalogue or record of authors, whether biographical, bibliographical, or critical, is of little use in itself. It answers the purpose of a dictionary; but unless we see the circumstances outside of these, the political situation, the moral state, and the physical condition of the people, we learn nothing as to their literature.

The history of the language demands no less careful treatment. The materials are all at hand. Its origin in the fusion of Anglo-Saxon and Norman-French must be laid bare, and the influences exerted on it by all other languages with which it has been brought in contact must be shown. The effects which have remained behind, and which time has not removed, are guides. There must be set forth also the passage of the language from an inflected to an uninflected form, alterations of grammatical structure, and the change in the vocabulary by the gradual dropping of old words and the introduction of new words, and also new modes of forming them. The effect on the language of historical events, such as wars and alliances, and of advances in science and the arts, should be considered. And not only should the history of the pure English of literature be thus given, but also of

its numerous spoken dialects and of their relations. This is most necessary.

Two subjects, so extensive in themselves, and leading in such different directions, can with difficulty be united in one work. For the sake of unity, either the literature must be made prominent, treating language as the vehicle for conveying the thought; or the attention must be directed to the language, the literature being regarded as the preserving medium of the words and forms.

Mr. Craik's book is not a History of the English Language, and it would have been better to have omitted that title. Indeed, he himself says that he is obliged to treat the language only incidentally and subordinately, as it is employed in the service of literature. However, he does consider it somewhat, and divides it into three periods, which he says are common to every language: first, when it is a homogeneous and synthetic language; second, when it is still homogeneous, but not synthetic; and, third, when it is neither, but is analytic and composite. The first period he designates as Pure or Simple English; the second, as Broken or Semi-English; the third, as Mixed or Composite English. Mr. Craik seems to have very imperfect notions of what English is. He forgets that English is a mixed language; that its very composite character is what makes it English; that there was no English language at all until the Anglo-Saxon and Norman-French began to unite. Anglo-Saxon can no more be called Pure English than can Latin be called Pure Italian, or Simple French; or, in fact, than Old French can be called Early English, for our language is much more like the French in grammatical structure and general appearance than like the Anglo-Saxon. Leaving out, then, this first period, we can only have two: Imperfect English, as it existed during the gradual fusion of the two tongues spoken in England; and Perfect English, after their union was completed. English is now homogeneous, as it never was in its early period of development, because it is catholic, and receives everything and assimilates it to itself.

The character of the Anglo-Saxon, and its peculiarities, and the manner of its corruption with Norman, are not treated of, while the gradual assimilation of the two tongues into one is passed over with some general remarks, and the subsequent progress of the language is almost entirely ignored. We are sorry that Mr. Craik did not do a little more for us, for we are sure that the author of "The English of Shakespeare" and of the Annotated Edition of Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* had stores of material and the ability to elucidate many obscure points.

As a record or chronicle of English literature Mr. Craik's book is by

far the best that has yet been published. He has gone over the whole range of our writers with minuteness and research. That portion of the book extending from the Norman Period, as he calls it, to the time of Elizabeth, is peculiarly excellent. Nowhere have we a better account of the early French and Latin literature of England. By none has fuller justice been done to the old chroniclers and romancers. This thoroughness and exactness will render it very useful as a book of reference.

It is surprising with what impartiality the author has reviewed the whole course of literature. He does not commit himself to excessive admiration of any one school or period. He appreciates the beauties of Pope as well as of Spenser, and finds much to commend in the artificialness of Wither and Marvel, as well as in the naturalness of Wordsworth. He evidently has considered well the duty of a critic, and no prejudices deter him from condemning Bacon as a philosopher (though giving him praise as a writer), or from declaring that "Don Juan" is the greatest poem of modern times. He has also looked at the writers with some regard to the times in which they lived, and the more immediate influences that were exerted upon them. The chapter on the Victorian Age is the place where he has shown himself to greatest advantage. It is the most philosophical, most comprehensive, and best portion of his book. Another good example of his general manner of treatment is shown in the account of the Della Cruscan school. The illustrative extracts are in general well selected, and will serve to convey to the reader an impression of the characteristics of the different authors, besides being often of intrinsic value in themselves, or as illustrations of the times. We are sorry, however, that some few of our favorite writers, who are passed over almost in silence, could not be better represented.

Mr. Craik's book is, however, as we have hinted before, not at all a philosophical or scientific history of English literature. It is little but a mere index or register of English writers. Indeed, that is all he claims for the greater part of it; for he says that all the history of the literature is contained in his accounts of a few principal authors. In his own language, "An account of the writings of Chaucer, of Spenser, of Shakespeare, of Bacon, of Milton, of Dryden, of Pope, of Swift, of Burke, of Burns, of Cowper, would sufficiently unfold the course and revolutions of our English literature from its commencement down to the beginning of the present century." In other words, by a few disjointed essays he would give an idea of a perfect whole. He would display a few of the best bricks as a sample of his house. A picture of an age can be given by historical portraits of its prominent men, but not its history. So we

can learn the character of a literature from the works of its greatest writers, but not its history. For little causes often produce great effects, and writers of not much account now may have exerted an influence which may be felt, while careful research alone will show its cause. This very method makes the book disjointed and fragmentary, and renders too evident the manner in which it was written; for it is an enlargement of a previous work, — “Sketches of the History of Literature and Learning in England.” And really, the same matter has done a good deal of duty. First in the book just named, then in this, and afterwards in an abridgment, and great part of it also in “The Popular History of England.”

But even on this plan the book is imperfect in some particulars. It is disproportionate and unsymmetrical. The original English, which, from the stress laid upon it in the classification, should be deserving of great attention, has about four pages devoted to its literature, i. e. to Anglo-Saxon literature; while to the writers in Norman-French and Latin there are given one hundred and thirty. To take another instance. From Chaucer on, there are about twenty-five names to whom more than five pages are given, and among them are Barbour, Warner, Daniel, Cleveland, Wither, Marvel, Nevile, Mandeville, and Darwin; while of these Cleveland and Wither are made of more importance than Milton or Cowper, and more space is given to Darwin than to Shakespeare or Pope; and Jeremy Taylor, Hooker, Butler, Burton, Addison, Thomson, Ben Jonson, Massinger, and Ford are done up in a few lines, and the name of Jewel is never once mentioned. Mr. Craik's Scotch antecedents have led him to give to Scotch literature rather more than its fair share of space and attention. Burns is as much English as Scotch, but there was no necessity of quite such an extended disquisition on John Barbour, or King James I., or the minor Scotch writers. Much is said about the progress of learning and of education, and the rise and growth of the mathematical sciences are considered at great length. But nothing is said about other sciences and branches of learning, which have exerted more influence on the literature. The ethical and political sciences are hardly noticed, and their great writers are only mentioned by their name, date, and the titles of their works. Hume, to whom modern metaphysics owe so much, is almost passed by as a philosopher. History even seems to have very little place as a part of literature. The changes in the religion of Britain must have affected its literature, but nothing is said of this. The religious literature of England is well worthy of attentive consideration. And why in this, as in most other literary histories, should poetry preponderate so much over prose? Fuller, Burke, and

Swift are the only prose-writers who are mentioned at any length, and Coleridge is regarded entirely as a poet, and it is hardly hinted that he ever wrote prose. Does not prose show to us as clearly as poetry the course of English thought, and does it not reflect better the thousand and one influences under which it was written? Its importance at least as regards the language is greater, for it displays it as used in speech, while poetry, using a traditional dialect, is always behindhand. But while schools of poetry are considered, we are not told of the great influence which great prose-writers have had on language and style. Even the influence of the English translation of the Bible is not mentioned.

Some of the incompleteness and disjointedness of the book is no doubt due to the principle of arrangement which Mr. Craik adopted. Having divided the language so as to get most of the literature into the last period, he treats of this in short chronological portions, speaking of each class of writings by itself, as drama, prose, science, &c. There are plainly four great eras in English literature, each marked by the character of its productions, although the writers belonging to one are sometimes in point of time a little mingled with those of another. There is, first, the Early or Romantic Period; second, the Elizabethan; third, the Renaissance; and, fourth, the Realistic, which is divided into two portions, — that of the beginning of the century, and the present. Each of these periods is marked by a certain dominant quality, and each shows the influence of a foreign literature, which indeed may have started the literary activity of the period. Each, too, might be noted by one great man. Thus the poetical representatives might be Chaucer, Shakespeare, Pope, and Wordsworth and Tennyson. Examples in prose would be Malory, Bacon, Addison, Coleridge, and Thackeray. A division such as this, where the writers of each era were brought together under the influence of the governing principle and characteristic of that age, would have given greater coherence and stability to a work of this kind, and would at the same time have shown why the works of many writers are what they are.

We notice a few errors, that impair somewhat the value of a work, which, in spite of its imperfections, is really useful and valuable. In Vol. I. p. 362, Mr. Craik speaks of Forshall and Madden as the editors of Wyclif's translation of the Old Testament. It would seem that he had never seen their edition, or he would have known that the New Testament was included in it also.

He also says that John Lyly invented Euphuism. This extravagance of nicety, so called from the book which most displayed it, was of old growth. Lyly's writing was only the culmination of that imitation of

Italian conceits and quibbles which had been increasing in the literature since the time when Italy began first to influence England. Euphuism was rather the end than the beginning. This same affectation existed in France as well as in England, and was one of the peculiarities of the coterie of the Hôtel de Rambouillet until Molière's sarcasm, sixty years later, put a stop to it.

We must also object to the modernization of the spelling of some of the earlier authors in the extracts which are given. However this may do in smaller, more popular works, it is a blemish and an unpardonable sin against language in a work aiming at literary excellence. We cannot really appreciate an ancient style in a modern dress, any more than we could the poetry of Chaucer if we tried to put in a different kind of metre, as Mr. Craik suggests.

Had the style of Mr. Craik himself been better, it would have improved the book. He indulges a little too much in bombast, and sometimes in ungrammatical expressions. But these faults are rare, and not perhaps worth dwelling upon.

3. — *A Dictionary of the Bible, comprising its Antiquities, Biography, Geography, and Natural History.* Edited by WILLIAM SMITH, LL. D. In Three Volumes. Vol. II. Kalzeel — Red Heifer. Vol. III. Red Sea — Zuzims. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company. 1863. 8vo. pp. 1862. Appendix, pp. cxvi.

THE first volume of Dr. Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible" was issued in 1860, and was at that time noticed in our pages. The second and larger portion of the work, in two volumes, has recently appeared, with an Appendix containing titles omitted in the first volume. We regret that want of space will not permit us to give such a review of the completed work as its importance demands. We can only state concisely what seem to us to be its merits and its defects.

Its literary excellence is, on the whole, very high. In nearly all the articles the style is clear, pure, free from rhetorical artifice, and adapted to a work of this kind.

The form in which the articles are cast and the method of discussion are generally good. The English title of each subject from the Scripture has its Greek and Hebrew equivalent; quotations are made to a great extent in the original languages; for the more important opinions abundant authorities are cited, with exact references; and the history of each subject is given as far as possible.

The Dictionary is very full, not only in its treatment of the impor-